



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton
National Park

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Grand Teton National Park News Release

Young Bison Discovered Fallen into Abandoned Pit

On Wednesday afternoon, June 2, a park employee performing work at the McCollister home site in the eastern section of Grand Teton National Park discovered that a yearling bull bison had fallen into an abandoned, dry, seepage pit on the north section of the property. The staff person notified park dispatch at 12 noon and park resource management personnel, rangers and maintenance staff all responded to the area to effect a rescue of the young bison.

It is unknown when the young bison fell into the abandoned, wood-covered pit. Apparently, the plywood cover gave way when the bison walked across it and he fell into a cone-shaped, concrete-lined area that was approximately 4 feet in diameter at the top, 6 feet in diameter at the bottom, and 7 feet deep.

Park biologists, rangers and maintenance personnel worked together to free the bison. Using a backhoe, a trench was dug adjacent to the seepage pit to create a ramp and provide an escape route. Under the direction of the park's senior biologist, Steve Cain, the bison was carefully pulled from the pit by a rope attached around its horns.

The bison was alive, but very weak. No serious injuries were obvious; however, he may have sustained internal injuries. External abrasions indicated that the yearling had struggled in attempts to free himself before being discovered. The young bison was moved a few yards away from the pit and left overnight to allow him time to recover without the presence of humans. The pit was covered by heavy equipment as a temporary measure to prevent the animal from potentially falling into it a second time.

Park biologists checked on the bison this morning, June 3. He had moved approximately 10 yards overnight, but still appears to be weak. His condition will be monitored throughout the day. If it becomes apparent that he has sustained mortal injuries, he will be humanely put down.

American bison are hearty animals and park personnel have often witnessed their survival after significant accidents or injuries.

Grand Teton National Park 75th Anniversary ~ 1929-2004
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